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General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 10 May 2018

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/72/L.51 and A/72/L.51/Add.1)*]

72/277. Towards a Global Pact for the Environment

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment,[1] the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[2] Agenda 21,[3] the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[4] the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[5] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation)[6] and the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want",[7] as well as the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields,

Recognizing existing obligations and commitments under international environmental law,

Reaffirming all the principles of the Rio Declaration,

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[1] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5–16 June 1972* (A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1), part one, chap. I.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] Resolution S-19/2, annex.

[5] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[6] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[7] Resolution 66/288, annex.

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Reaffirming also its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Noting the convening of the high-level event held on the sidelines of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly on 19 September 2017, entitled "Summit on a Global Pact for the Environment",

Stressing the need to continue to address, in a comprehensive and coherent manner, the challenges posed by environmental degradation in the context of sustainable development,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session in 2018 a technical and evidence-based report that identifies and assesses possible gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments with a view to strengthening their implementation;

2. *Decides* to establish an ad hoc open-ended working group, under the auspices of the General Assembly, to consider the report and discuss possible options to address possible gaps in international environmental law and environment-related instruments, as appropriate, and, if deemed necessary, the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument, with a view to making recommendations, which may include the convening of an intergovernmental conference to adopt an international instrument, to the Assembly during the first half of 2019;

3. *Also decides* that the ad hoc open-ended working group shall be open to participation by all States Members of the United Nations and all members of the specialized agencies;

4. *Further decides* that attendance at the sessions of the ad hoc open-ended working group as observers will be opened to relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in accordance with the provisions of Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, as well as to those that were accredited to relevant conferences and summits,[8] on the understanding that participation means attending formal meetings, unless otherwise decided by the working group in specific situations, receiving copies of the official documents, making available their materials to delegates and addressing the meetings, through a limited number of their representatives, as appropriate;

5. *Decides* that the ad hoc open-ended working group shall hold the following sessions, with the provision of interpretation services, in accordance with established practice:

(a) An organizational session, to be held for a duration of three working days, by the end of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, in New York, in

[8] Reference is made to the non-governmental organizations that were accredited to the following relevant conferences and summits: the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda.

order to examine matters related to the organization of the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group, including the duration and number of its substantive sessions;

(b) Substantive sessions, to be held in Nairobi, the first of which at least one month after the submission of the report of the Secretary-General;

6. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session to appoint two co-chairs of the ad hoc open-ended working group, one from a developing country and one from a developed country, to oversee its consultations, in regular coordination and consultation with all Member States, regional groups and all relevant stakeholders, and underlines that the work of the working group must be open, transparent and inclusive;

7. *Decides* that the costs associated with the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group shall be met from voluntary contributions;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to arrange for substantive support to be provided by the United Nations Environment Programme, on the basis of voluntary contributions, without prejudice to the current voluntary funded programmatic activities of the Programme, including all assistance necessary for the performance of the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group, secretariat services and the provision of essential background information and relevant documents, complemented, as appropriate, by other relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes;

9. *Recognizes* that the process indicated above should not undermine existing relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional and sectoral bodies;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish a special voluntary trust fund in support of the process, and invites Member States, international financial institutions, donor agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and natural and juridical persons to make financial contributions to the voluntary trust fund;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to establish a special voluntary trust fund for the purpose of assisting developing countries, in particular, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in attending the sessions of the ad hoc open-ended working group, including daily subsistence allowance, in addition to defraying the costs of economy-class travel for one delegate per State for each session, and invites Member States, international financial institutions, donor agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and natural and juridical persons to make financial contributions to the voluntary trust fund.

88th plenary meeting
10 May 2018